



CONNECTICUT CATHOLIC PUBLIC AFFAIRS CONFERENCE  
134 FARMINGTON AVENUE  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06105 - 3784

CHRISTOPHER C. HEALY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEACON DAVID W. REYNOLDS  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
FOR PUBLIC POLICY

ANNE S. LAMONICA  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
FOR EDUCATION

LORI A. STEWART  
LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

Testimony on  
Senate Bill No. 1  
*An Act Concerning Earned Family and Medical Leave*

Christopher C. Healy  
Executive Director  
Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference

Labor and Public Employees Committee  
February 14, 2019

The Connecticut Catholic Public Affairs Conference, the public policy office of Connecticut's Catholic Bishops, supports Senate Bill No. 1 which would provide Connecticut workers with paid family and medical leave. The health and spiritual strength of all families is critical to a just society. To that end, this legislation aims to secure these strengths, which will yield other economic benefits for Connecticut residents and businesses.

Governor Lamont and the proponents of this bill should be commended for making this legislation one of their top priorities this year.

For too long, public debate has focused on strengthening a family's ability to remain intact, vibrant, and responsible for its rightful role as the central element to the collective good. Yet, the challenges of raising a family are more acute than ever. New mothers should be able to care for their newborns without fear of missing a paycheck. Similarly, when illness or tragedy strikes, working parents, who often care for both their children and aging parents, would benefit from the relief that this bill offers. Otherwise, financial survival becomes very difficult.

The Catholic Church teaches that the family is the cornerstone of our society. If we have healthy, strong, and stable families, children grow into responsible and productive members of society. Healthy families also are essential to a strong growing economy. A paid family and medical leave program will help us attain these goals because workers will no longer have to decide between taking care of a loved one or earning a paycheck. In addition to losing their paycheck, full-time employees also have to weigh losing their insurance coverage.

Additionally, Senate Bill No. 1 addresses legitimate concerns about funding such a program and the impact on employers. This bill proposes the establishment of a special fund that would make payments to employees taking family and medical leave. These funds would not

come from the employers, but from all Connecticut employees. An employer would not be burdened with paying two salaries should a paid family and medical leave policy be enacted.

The Connecticut Catholic Conference recognizes that this legislation addresses an extremely important issue for Connecticut families. Delaying the adoption of paid family and medical leave in Connecticut will be of no benefit to the people of our state. This legislation is an excellent start to a more just and productive workplace while providing the financial and emotional security that workers and their families have earned and deserve.